

MORGANTOWN RIVER TOWN ASSESSMENT NOTES

OCTOBER 9, 2013

Next Meeting: December 5th, 2013 4:30 to 6:30 pm
Hazel Ruby McQuain Depot

WHARF DISTRICT

- Discussion of Wharf District and the occupancy rate. It was suggested it was 80% occupied but then there have been restaurants in the area that have not been successful. They are not pulling in from town—why? Not easily accessible. Signage from the main street, which is heavily traveled (University Avenue) is not adequate. It is not easy to cross the street. Parking issues.

TASK: Meet with Main Street Program to determine their projects: Cathy

- The Wharf District though is “hip/upcoming” according to one person during the assessment and others agreed. Well- designed but inadequate signage?
- Are buskers permitted? How are the streets enlivened? Music and art? Vendors and school children? Clubs at the university? Pop up artists?

TASK: Research local regulations related to these issues: Steve

- Also mentioned was the need for secure bike storage. There apparently is some but no one knows about it and it might be difficult to use. Need to learn more—can it be more effectively marketed?

TASK: Visit existing bike storage area: Cathy

- Wharf District is not very family oriented right now. It could be a bike hub or the park could be. Drop off and pick up free bikes to get around town. A playground for children is also needed.

PARK

- One problem is the transit depot and those it sometimes attracts; homeless and transient population.
- Ice cream and other family-friendly retail needed in the park. Could there be naming opportunities to raise resources? What about corporate sponsorships?
- The fountain in the river was private funding (\$25K)

Considerable discussion took place about encouraging new events and festivals at the Park and along the trail as well as promoting current events and festivals more effectively.

TASK: Brainstorm next steps at next action team meeting. Roles to be assigned then.

- Student clubs could be involved in using the park more; offering activities for the public to participate in or watch; such as lighted Frisbee.
- What about a Myths and Legends of the River/Town festival at the amphitheater? What better location?
- What about a boardwalk, walk way along the river; behind the amphitheater (now quite trashy) Who maintains the riverfront now? Need more trash containers?
- Related idea of a walking and fishing trail along the river from the Morgantown dam down to Deckers Creek. Inquire about property rights along this strip of land.

TASK: Inquire of Main Street if they are involved; Inquire of City if they maintain riverfront and are trash containers being purchased? Cathy (Main Street); Steve (City)

- Bring anglers into the River Town discussion; good fishing in the area. How do we reach out to them?

TASK: Research any angling clubs; where do fishermen get their information now?

Where are the good fishing spots in and around Morgantown: Steve

- There is a boat launch near the park, but it is inadequate. No parking available for trailers, or turning around. It would be very difficult to launch a motorized boat.

TASK: Are there any existing plans for the Riverfront area: Steve

TRAIL

- Trail rules and regulations need to be posted more visibly. There is a sign but it is not very visible. In a “noisy” place by the center of the park

TASK: Talk to Ella and Mon River Trail Council; when is the next meeting: Cathy

- There seems to be limited river access. Few places to launch and very few places to sit by the river
- Shrubs and small trees have grown up, obstructing a view of the river in many places along the trail. Can we open up the view in places, creating sight lines of the river? Placing benches in strategic locations with a river view?

TASK: At next meeting, review where brush clearing is occurring now. Look for ways to support and expand these efforts.

- PRT pillars offer a good opportunity for lighting as well as art.

TASK: Need a contact at PRT? Steve

- Better lighting along the trail is needed. Feels unsafe although that may be the perception rather than the reality. Opportunity to introduce innovative colored lighting under and on concrete bridges.
- More public art at strategic locations along the trail. Work with CCA on this.

TASK: Steve to reach out to College of Creative Arts on this one.

- There are empty gravel lots along the trail for parking when there is activity at the amphitheater although it is underutilized the other times. Not attractively landscaped.

LINKAGES

- Discussion concerning safer and better signed walking and biking routes between High Street and the trail and riverside area. Better trail access at Walnut St bridge. Behind old Gold's gym building.

TASK: At next action team meeting, review progress on key walking and biking linkages, next steps and key roles.

Next Meeting: December 5th, 2013 4:30 to 6:30 pm. Hazel Ruby McQuain Bus Depot